



Don't Allow a Water-Wasting Fixture to Run Wild in Your Bathroom

- Has your water bill skyrocketed for no apparent reason?
- Does your toilet flush itself?
- Can you hear the sound of running water, long after flushing?

If you answered “yes” to any of these questions, chances are you have a leaky toilet. If you do, you're not alone. It's estimated that 20 percent of all toilets leak. Even if you can't hear the leak, you could be losing up to 100 gallons of water every day. That's more than 36,000 gallons of water each year! In a typical residence, toilets account for more than 40% of all indoor water use.

You can tame your toilet by taking the following steps

Check your toilet for leaks.

Put some food coloring in the tank. Wait 5-10 minutes. If you see color in the toilet bowl, you probably have a leak.

Find a leak?

Check the flapper. Toilet leaks are often the result of a faulty flapper (also called “flush valve ball” or “tank stopper”). A flapper should be replaced every 3-5 years. Replacement flappers are available at most plumbing supply, home improvement, or hardware stores. Select the highest quality product that you can afford.

Before you start work, shut off the water supply to the toilet (the valve should be located underneath the tank) and flush it to empty the tank of water. Check the valve seat (the opening below the flapper) at the same time you replace the flapper. If the valve seat looks corroded, clean it with an emery cloth, available at home improvement or hardware stores.

Check The Ballcock. The ballcock (located inside the tank behind the flush handle) is your toilet's internal water supply valve. There are two types of ballcocks: one has a float ball attached to a rod, the other type has a black cylindrical float cup.

1. To repair/adjust a ballcock with a float ball, gently pull up on the float ball rod. If the water shuts off, the float ball is the problem. It may have water in it, or may be set too high. Unscrew the ball. If it has water in it, replace it. If there's no water in the ball, the rod needs to be lowered. Use the adjustment screw on the top of the ball cock to the rod to lower the ball. The ball height should be one-half to one inch lower than the top of the overflow tube or at the water line marked in the tank. If you feel pressure and the water doesn't shut off when you pull up on the float ball rod, the ballcock is the problem. If the ballcock looks like it is in good condition, try changing the washers in the top of the valve. If the valve is corroded or appears broken, replace it.
2. To repair/adjust a ballcock with a float cup. Shut off the water supply to the toilet. Remove upper cap assembly of the ball cock by rotating 1/8 turn counter-clockwise and lifting it off. Hold a container over the top of the uncapped valve to prevent splashing when the water supply is turned on. Turn the water supply valve on and off a few times to clear out debris. Replace the upper cap assembly.

Leaks waste water and money. Sedona is located in the desert - we must use this precious resource wisely.

Be a leak detective.

Stop, look, and listen for leaks regularly. Check your faucets, too. Before you begin any repairs, consult a good do-it-yourself guide, a handy friend, or a trusted plumber.

You Can Reduce Water Waste in Your Home in Other Ways

Install an ultra-low-flush toilet.

You can conserve up to four gallons of water per flush.

Install low-flow faucets and shower heads.

Low-flow fixtures can reduce the flow of water by 50 percent.

Take shorter showers.

Don't let the water run while you shave or brush your teeth. If you do, you can waste up to 10 gallons of water.

